



HEARD ACROSS MONTANA

VOLUME 4 • ISSUE 10 • March 7, 2008



Becky Berger Honored by E9-1-1 Institute

By E. Wing Spooner espooner@mt.gov

Every year, the E9-1-1 Institute, in conjunction with the Congressional E9-1-1 Caucus, holds an awards ceremony in Washington, D.C. to honor heroes and leaders in the 9-1-1 field. This year, the E-911 Institute has named Becky Berger as the winner of the Local Government Leader for 2007. Becky is the 9-1-1 Program Manager for the State of Montana in the Public Safety Services Bureau (PSSB).



Featured L-R above: Gregory Rohde, Executive Director, 9-1-1 Institute; Alaskan Senator Ted Stevens; Becky Berger, Local Government Leader Award; Arthur Prest, Director, Small Telecommunications Carriers; and George S. Rice Jr., Director, APCO International

The E9-1-1 Institute is a not-for-profit organization that provides administrative and policy support to the Congressional E9-1-1 Caucus. The purpose of the E9-1-1 Institute is to promote public education and awareness of E9-1-1 and emergency communications issues and to serve as a clearinghouse for E9-1-1 and emergency communications information.

Chris Christensen, PSSB Bureau Chief, said, "Becky is to be commended for her dedication to the goals and mission of the 9-1-1 program in Montana. She has been diligent in her work to bring together stakeholders to promote a stronger enhanced 9-1-1 service in the state. We are very proud to have her on our team."

E9-1-1 Institute Executive Director Gregory L. Rohde echoed these sentiments by saying, "Becky Berger is the face of 9-1-1 service in Montana. She has directed the program and pushed for it at every turn. Her leadership has made significant contributions to overcome the massive geographic

challenges to deliver 9-1-1 in one of the most rural states in the Union."

The award was presented to Becky on March 4 at a prestigious ceremony in Washington, D.C.

Beaverhead County Federal Meetings

By Scott Bradford sbradford@mt.gov

On Feb.19, representatives from Beaverhead County, State of Montana and the Interoperability Montana (IM) Project met with representatives from the United States Forest Services and Bureau of Land Management in Dillon. The purpose of the meeting was to define the project scope and outline the details of federal processes that need to be completed to allow Beaverhead County and the IM Project to utilize five sites in southwest Montana.

The sites are scheduled to be developed as part of the IM microwave network pending federal approval of Montana's Public Safety Interoperability Communications (PSIC) grant investment justifications. Required steps and timelines were established for processing environmental assessments and communication plans. Pending completion of these steps, it is anticipated that work on several of the sites may begin this year.

Big Sky 11 Consortium Meeting

By E. Wing Spooner espooner@mt.gov

The Big Sky 11 Consortium met in Billings on Feb. 28 at 10:00 am. Project Director Ed Auker discussed the necessity of having jurisdictions loan or share their frequencies to the Interoperability Montana (IM) Project. He clarified that on a day-to-day basis, functionality remains the same. The jurisdiction would have to provide a year's notice if it decided not to let the IM Project use its frequencies anymore. All it takes is a one-year notice to pull the frequencies from the project. An MOU would be in place for the use of these frequencies. Jurisdictions within the consortium who want to be involved with the sharing of frequencies were encouraged to contact Ray Hetherington at wc911@mtintouch.net.

Ed reported that the Northern Cheyenne is nearly done with easements and agreements at Fisher Butte. He indicated that agreement forms and templates are available at <http://interop.mt.gov>. He and Sherry Evans also have forms available.

At the last IMPD meeting, members were informed that Northrop Grumman's contract is being extended by a couple of months because additional time was needed to produce the Request for



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Proposals (RFP) to solicit vendors for project management work. The issue of having PSSB do the day-to-day management for the Big Sky 11 was addressed.

Roger Smith and Dale Osborne gave a presentation on the preliminary microwave network build-out plans for the Yellowstone County area. The Public Safety Interoperability Communications (PSIC) grant is being used to get microwave communications into Billings. The path will be from MacDonald Pass to the Shane Ridge site near Billings.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thurs., March 27 at 9:00 am for the technical meeting and 10:00 am for the board meeting. The meeting place is to be announced.

Finance Sub-Committee Meeting

By E. Wing Spooner espooner@mt.gov

Butte Silver Bow Sheriff John Walsh, the new Finance Sub-Committee Chair, held a meeting of the Finance Sub-Committee on Monday, March 3 in Helena. It was announced that Homeland Security has approved a six-month extension on Montana's FY05 Homeland Security grant. The Finance Sub-Committee will hold an extra meeting this month on Tues., March 18 beginning from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm to make changes to the budget that will be needed as a result of the extension. Members also discussed unpaid invoices as well as five Decision/Information Requests (DIRs).

Bob McWilliams explained an engineering study that is necessary to complete for PSIC projects. Bill Fleiner clarified that he will serve as the interim Finance Officer while Keith Lavender, Northrop Grumman, will prepare spreadsheets and assist with the accounting transition to Anderson and ZurMuehlen (AZ).

Chris Christensen explained that he is working with MACO to ensure that completed sites are covered on local county insurance policies. He also reported that a security plan is anticipated to be in place sometime mid-April. Chris also gave a brief history on the BNSF Railway partnership, and explained that site improvements in Lincoln County are anticipated.

The next IM Finance Sub-Committee meeting will be held at Northrop Grumman, 2401 Colonial Drive in Helena.

Upcoming Meetings

March 12

Statewide Interoperability Executive Council (SIEC)
Helena • 10:00 am - Noon • Rm. 152, State Capitol

March 13

South Central MT Interoperability Consortium (SCMIC)
White Sulphur Springs • 10:00 am
White Sulfur Springs Training Center (Next to the Sheriff's Office 101, W. Crawford St.)

March 14

Four-State 9-1-1 Confab
Bowman, ND • 10:00 am
Bowman County Courthouse, 104 1st Street NW

March 20

I-15/90 Corridor Consortium
Butte • 10:00 am
Chamber of Commerce Conf. Rm.; 1000 George St.

March 26

Eastern Tier Consortium (ETIC)
Miles City • 10:00 am
4-H Building, Custer County Fairgrounds, Old Highway 10

March 27

Big Sky 11 • Billings • 10:00 am
Location to be announced

March 31

IMGC Finance Sub-Committee
Helena • 9:00 am - Noon
Northrop Grumman Offices, 2401 Colonial Drive
Governance Committee
Helena • Noon - 5:00 pm
DOC Annex Conf. Rm.; Behind 515 N. Sanders St.

April 1

IM Project Directors (IMPD) Meeting
Helena • 9:00 am - 3:00 pm • State Capitol

April 2 (Tentative)

Central Montana Consortium (CMICC)
Great Falls • 10:00 am • Wheat Building; 750 6th Street SW

April 3

Northern Tier (NTIP)
Havre • 9:00 am • Great Northern Inn, 1345 1st St.

**Don't Forget to Set Your Clocks
Forward This Weekend!**

